

What is Claimed is:

1 1. A carrying case for electronic equipment, such as a portable computer,
2 comprising

3 a back wall and a front wall connected to one another by a top wall, a bottom wall
4 and a pair of side walls, said back, front, top, bottom and side walls defining an interior;

5 a wall surface in said interior and a floating panel in said interior spaced from said
6 wall surface such that an equipment receiving compartment for receiving electronic
7 equipment is defined in said interior between said wall surface and said floating panel,
8 said floating panel being selectively movable linearly toward and away from said wall
9 surface; and

10 a securing mechanism in said interior adapted to resiliently bias said floating panel
11 toward said wall surface such that electronic equipment in said equipment receiving
12 compartment is compressively held between said wall surface and said floating panel.

1 2. A carrying case as recited in claim 1 wherein said floating panel is movable
2 linearly toward and away from said wall surface in a direction perpendicular to said wall
3 surface.

1 3. A carrying case as recited in claim 2 wherein said back wall and said front
2 wall are exterior walls of said carrying case and have inner surfaces, respectively, facing
3 into said interior, and said wall surface is defined by one of said inner surfaces.

4 4. A carrying case as recited in claim 3 wherein said wall surface is defined by
5 said inner surface of said back wall.

1 5. A carrying case as recited in claim 4 wherein said floating panel is spaced
2 from said front wall such that a storage compartment is defined in said interior between
3 said floating panel and said front wall, said storage compartment being adjustable in size
4 in response to linear movement of said floating panel toward and away from said wall
5 surface.

1 6. A carrying case as recited in claim 5 and further including a selectively
2 openable, selectively closable opening in said top wall providing access to said equipment
3 receiving compartment.

1 7. A carrying case as recited in claim 6 and further including a selectively
2 openable, selectively closable opening in said front wall providing access to said storage
3 compartment.

1 8. A carrying case as recited in claim 1 wherein said floating panel has a
2 surface facing said wall surface and said wall surface and said surface of said floating
3 panel are padded to protect the electronic equipment.

1 9. A carrying case as recited in claim 8 wherein said securing mechanism
2 includes a stretchable member releasably connected between said wall surface and said
3 floating panel, said stretchable member providing a cushioning effect for the electronic
4 equipment when said carrying case is subjected to an impact.

1 10. A carrying case as recited in claim 9 and further including a shock absorbing
2 mechanism in said interior providing a cushioning effect for the electronic equipment when
3 said carrying case is subjected to an impact.

1 11. A carrying case as recited in claim 10 wherein said shock absorbing
2 mechanism includes a pair of compressible side bumpers extending in the same direction
3 as said side walls on opposite sides of said equipment receiving compartment and at least
4 one compressible bottom bumper extending in the same direction as said bottom wall at
5 a bottom of said equipment receiving compartment such that electronic equipment
6 received in said equipment receiving compartment is disposed between said side bumpers
7 and is supported on said bottom bumper when said carrying case is in an upright position.

1 12. A carrying case as recited in claim 11 and further including a restraint
2 disposed at a top of said equipment receiving compartment and releasably connected
3 between said wall surface and said floating panel, said restraint resiliently biasing the
4 electronic equipment toward said bottom wall and providing a cushioning effect for the
5 electronic equipment when said carrying case is subjected to an impact.

6 13. A carrying case as recited in claim 12 wherein said restraint includes a
7 stretchable member releasably connected between said wall surface and said floating
8 panel.

1 14. A carrying case for electronic equipment, such as a portable computer,
2 comprising

3 a back wall and a front wall connected to one another by a top wall, a bottom wall
4 and a pair of side walls, said back, front, top, bottom and side walls defining an interior;

5 a wall surface in said interior and a floating panel in said interior spaced from said
6 wall surface to define an equipment receiving compartment therebetween for receiving
7 electronic equipment, said equipment receiving compartment having an open top end
8 closed by said top wall, a bottom end closed by said bottom wall, and a width between said
9 wall surface and said floating panel, said floating panel being selectively movable in a
10 direction perpendicular to said wall surface from a fully extended position, wherein said
11 floating panel is spaced from said wall surface a distance corresponding to a maximum
12 width for said equipment receiving compartment, to an adjusted position, wherein said
13 floating panel is disposed closer to said wall surface to obtain a width for said equipment
14 receiving compartment that is less than said maximum width; and

15 a securing mechanism for resiliently biasing said floating panel, in said adjusted
16 position, into abutment with the electronic equipment received in said equipment receiving
17 compartment.

1 15. A carrying case as recited in claim 14 wherein said floating panel includes
2 a pair of side edges extending in the same direction as said side walls and further
3 including a pair of connecting members extending between said side edges and said wall
4 surface whereby said floating panel is connected to said wall surface.

1 16. A carrying case as recited in claim 15 wherein said connecting members
2 have a width between said wall surface and said floating panel corresponding to said
3 maximum width, said connecting members being retractable in the direction of said width
4 of said connecting members to accommodate movement of said floating panel from said
5 fully extended position to said adjusted position.

1 17. A carrying case as recited in claim 16 wherein said connecting members are
2 formed by pleated panels, respectively, having a length extending between said top and
3 bottom edges of said floating panel, said pleated panels having pleats that are open when
4 said floating panel is in said fully extended position and that begin to close as said floating
5 panel is moved from said fully extended position toward said adjusted position.

1 18. A carrying case as recited in claim 17 wherein said pleated panels are
2 straight when said floating panel is in said fully extended position.

1 19. A carrying case as recited in claim 18 wherein said back wall and said front
2 wall are exterior walls of said carrying case and have inner surfaces, respectively, facing
3 into said interior, and said wall surface is defined by one of said inner surfaces.

1 20. A carrying case as recited in claim 19 wherein said wall surface is defined
2 by said inner surface of said back wall.

1 21. A carrying case as recited in claim 20 wherein said floating panel is spaced
2 from said front wall such that a storage compartment is defined in said interior between
3 said floating panel and said front wall, and further including a selectively openable,
4 selectively closable opening in said top wall providing access to said equipment receiving
5 compartment and said storage compartment, and a selectively openable, selectively
6 closable flap in said front wall providing access to said storage compartment.

1 22. A carrying case as recited in claim 15 wherein said wall surface and said
2 floating panel are substantially rigid to protect the electronic equipment, said floating panel
3 includes a surface facing into said equipment receiving compartment and said wall surface
4 and said surface of said floating panel are padded.

1 23. A carrying case as recited in claim 22 wherein said securing mechanism
2 includes a pair of stretchable members releasably connected between said wall surface
3 and said floating panel on opposite sides of said side edges, said stretchable members

4 being capable of stretching to absorb kinetic energy of the electronic equipment when said
5 carrying case is subjected to an impact.

1 24. A carrying case as recited in claim 23 wherein said stretchable members
2 include a pair of elasticized straps having first ends, respectively, secured to said wall
3 surface and second ends, respectively, for being releasably secured to said floating panel.

1 25. A carrying case as recited in claim 24 wherein said straps are disposed
2 between said connecting members and said side walls.

1 26. A carrying case as recited in claim 24 and further including an impact
2 absorbing mechanism in said equipment receiving compartment for absorbing kinetic
3 energy of the electronic equipment when said carrying case is subjected to an impact.

1 27. A carrying case as recited in claim 26 wherein said connecting members
2 have a length extending from said top edge to said bottom edge of said floating panel, said
3 impact absorbing mechanism includes a first pair of compressible cushions disposed in
4 said equipment receiving compartment to extend along said connecting members,
5 respectively, at least partway along said length such that electronic equipment received
6 in said equipment receiving compartment is disposed between said first pair of cushions.

1 28. A carrying case as recited in claim 27 wherein said impact absorbing
2 mechanism further includes a second pair of cushions disposed at a bottom of said
3 equipment receiving compartment to extend along said bottom wall at opposite sides of
4 said equipment receiving compartment, respectively, such that electronic equipment
5 received in said equipment receiving compartment is disposed upon said second pair of
6 cushions when said carrying case is in an upright position.

1 29. A carrying case as recited in claim 28 and further including a top restraint at
2 a top of said equipment receiving compartment resiliently biasing the electronic equipment
3 toward said bottom wall, said top restraint including an elasticized band releasably
4 connected between said wall surface and said floating panel, said band being capable of
5 stretching to absorb kinetic energy of the electronic equipment when said carrying case
6 is subjected to an impact.